The Life and Death of

ROSAMOND,

King *Henry* the *Seconds*

CONCUBINE.

And how ſhe was Poyſoned to death by Queen *Elenor*.

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CHAP. I.

The Birth, Behaviour, and Linage of Lady *Rosamond*.

THere sprang from that ancient and Noble House of the Cliffords, a beautiful Damsel, named Rosamond, Daughter to the Lord Walter Cliffords: Her incomparable Beauty was couched in her Name: she was Natures Masterpiece, and one of the fairest Roses that ever flourished in the Garden of Earth. This fair Lady, as she grew in years, so did she grow in favour, each year adding a moity to her perfection, who having attained some ripeness of years, her Beauty was the whole discourse of the Country & City; Fame did carry the Name of Rosamond upon her nimble wings into many forreign places, whereby she was not only the pub-

publique and common Discourse of our English Nation, but even the Table talk of remote Countries, and forreign people: Her modesty was such that she sought by all means to allay that far spread rumor of her Beauty, by a retired Life; but the more she thought to extinguish and quench that report, by sequestring her self from the eyes of Men, the more it was spoken of, and the farther was her praises blown; at length her Name began to bloom in Court, insomuch that there was scarce any Courtier that did not echo forth her praises. She was so honoured among the attendants of the King, that whatsoever subject they talked of, and in what praise soever they delivered it, they thought their discourse not full, except the closure of it was still of Rosamond; so that Rosamonds beauty which was heretofore but Chamber-talk in the Court, and was but privately whispered in peoples ears, now began to be noon-talk, and openly spoken of, insomuch that the King took notice of her unseen, though not unheard of Beauty; being desirous to behold that Creature, whose unlimited and sounded praises the whole world rung of.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How King *Henry* the Second hearing of *Roſamonds* Beauty, could not reſt until he had ſeen her, and obtained her love.

The Kings unquiet thoughts would not ſuffer him to reſt, till he had been made an eye witneſs of Roſamonds beauty: after ſome time paſſed, he beheld her whole Countenance he had ſo long deſired to ſee: and caſting his eyes upon her incomparable favour, he perceived that thoſe Encomiums which in his hearing had been beſtowed on her, were but as the Gloomy Morning to the Lightſom Day, and came as far ſhort of expreſſing her Comlineſs, as the ſable night doth the glorious Noontide, or the blackiſh Smoak to the glittering Flame: neither could he be ſatisfied onely with the view of this beautiful Creature, but ſtill his boyling breaſt was vexed with unlawful and luſtful thoughts; deſiring that there might be ſome more Familiarity and acquaintance between them: His thoughts ſlept not long, but many ſnares were by him laid to intrap her, and many

forts erected to parted her unstained purity: many persons did he set at work soliciting her to yield to his unchast desires: which solicitations were as Darts cast against a brazen Wall, and could not enter: which when the King perceived, the next opportunity that presented her self unto his view, he delivers his mind to her himself, manifesting his love to her, who refusing all denials, and with gracious promises and inticing speeches, left her not till he had gotten her favour, and made her promise to fulfill his will.

CHAP. III.

The King hearing Queen *Elenors* Jealousie, builded a Bower for *Rosamond*, in *Woodstock*.

After the King had for some time enjoyed the Company of his late-gined Lady, Elenor his Queen hearing that her Lord did too too much frequent the company of his loose Damsel, and perceiving his affection to be altred, and estranged from her, that was his Lawful Queen, and to be fired on the beauty of another, used all the means that a Womans wit, sharpened with Malice, could invent, to

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untye the fast knit bands of their affections: which malice of the Queen towards this Lady, the King soon perceiv'd, and fearing that which afterwards happened, lest his dear Rose should come to any untimely Death, erected for her Labyrinth, within his own Palace at Woodstock in Oxfordshire, a place under ground most curiously wrought, having many turnings, windings and doors belonging to it, that it was impossible, being once entred, to find the way out of it, without the guidance of a Clew of Thread. The charge of this place wherein this Paramour was inclosed, he committed to Sir Thomas Vaughn, Knight, his sure and trusty friend.

CHAP. IV.

While the King was in *France*, *Rosamond* was Poysoned by Queen *Elnor*.

ALL this while the Queens malice was kindled, but now it began to shew it self, and break into flames, she had as many Windows and devices in her heart to procure the overthrow and destruction of Rosamond, as Woodstocks Bower for her safety, which Devices are

all set going; and the better to effect and bring this Plot to pass, she sets the Son against the Father, who by her means and instigation, raised an Army against him, intending to ring the Diadem from his Fathers head. Whilst the King is forced by his Rebellious Son, to hast to Normanday, and to absent himself from the company of his Rosamond. His Queen posts to Woodstock, and beholding the

Bower

Bower wherein Rosamond was kept, assayed to enter: and having before-hand received some notice of the clew of thread, takes it in her hand, and by its guidance is directed to the center of the Labyrinth, where she found Rosamond sitting as the Sun within that little world. Fair Rosamond when she beheld the ghastly visage and meagure Countenance of the jealous Queen, confest her fault, and craved pardon for her offences; but all in vain, for nothing could appease her fury, nor quench her thirst, but the blood of Rosamond, who was by her in that place deprived of life by a Cup of Poyson, for depriving her of the favour of her King. She was buried at Godstow in Oxfordshire, where she had a stately Monument raised with this following Epitaph on it, which was demolished by a certain Bishop of that Diocess not thinking fit so ill a Liver should have so fair a Tomb in so Sacred a place.

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Her Epitaph.

THe Roſe of the World,
But not the clean Flower,
Is here now Graven,
To whom Beauty was lent;
In this Grave full ſure,
Now is her Bower,
Sweet and Redolent:
But now that ſhe is
From her Life blent,
Though ſhe were ſweet,
Now fouly doth ſhe ſtink:
A Mirrour good for all
That on her think.

A Mournful Ditty of the Fair Lady *Rosamond*, KING *Henry* the Seconds Concubine, who was Poysoned to death by Queen *Elenor*, in *Woodstock* Bower, near *Oxford*.

When as King Henry rul'd this Land,
the second of that name,

Besides

Besides the Queen he dearly lov'd,
a fair and comely dame:
Most Peerless was her beauty found,
her favour and her face,
A sweeter creature in this world,
did never Prince imbrace.

Her crisped Locks like threads of Gold,
appear'd to each mans sight,
Her comely eyes like orient Pearls,
did cast a Heavenly light:
The blood within her Cristial cheeks,
did such a colour drive,
As though the Lilly and the Rose,
for mastership did strive.

Fair Rosamond, fair Rosamond,
her name was called so,
To whome dame Elinor our Queen,
was known a deadly foe,
The King therefore for her defence,
against the furious Queen,
At Woodstock builded such a Bower,
the like was never seen.

Most curiously that Bower was built,
of Stone and Timber strong,

Hundred and fifty doors,
did to this Bower belong,
And they so cunningly contriv'd,
with turnings round about,
That none but with a clew of thread,
could enter in or out.

And for his Love and Ladies sake,
that was so fair and bright,
The keeping of this Bower he gave,
unto a valiant Knight:
But Fortune that doth often frown,
where it before did smile,
The Kings delight, the Ladies joy,
full soon she did beguile.

For why, the Kings ungracious Son,
whom he did high advance,
Against his Father raised Wars,
within the Realm of France,
But yet before our comely King
the English Land forsook,
Of Rosamond his Lady fair,
his farewel thus he took.

My Rosamond, my only Rose,
that pleasest best mine eye,

The fairest flower in all the world,
to feed my fantasie:
The flower of my affected heart,
whose sweetness doth excell,
My Royal Rose a hundred times,
I bid thee now farewell.

For I must leave my fairest flower;
my sweetest Rose a space,
And cross the Seas to famous France,
proud Rebels to abase:
But yet my Rose be sure thou shalt
my coming shortly see,
And in my heart when hence I am,
I'le bear my Rose with me.

When Rosamond, that Lady bright,
did hear the King say so,
The sorrow of her grieved heart,
her outward looks did show:
And from her clear and cristial eyes,
the tears gusht out apace,
Which like the silver pearled dew,
ran down her comely face.

Her lips like to the coral red,
did wax both wan and pale,

And for the sorrow she conceiv'd,
her vital spirits did fail:
And falling down all in a swound,
before King Henries face,
full oft within his Princely arms,
her body did imbrace.

And twenty times with watery eyes
he kist her tender Cheek,
until he had reviv'd again,
her senses mild and meek:
Why grieves my Rose, my sweetest Rose
the King did often say,
Because quoth she, to bloody wars,
my Lord must pass away.

But since your Grace in forraign coasts
amongst your foes unkind,
must go to hazard life and limb,
why should I stay behind?
Nay rather let me like a Page,
thy Sword and Target bear,
That on my Breast the blow may light,
that should offend you there.

O let me in your Royal Tent,
prepare your bed at night,

And

And with ſweet baths refreſh your grace,
at your return from fight,
So I your preſence may injoy,
no toyl I will refuſe,
But wanting you my life is death,
which doth true Love abuſe.

Content thy ſelf my deareſt Love,
thy reſt at home ſhall be,
In Englands ſweet and pleaſant ſoil,
for travel fits not thee:
Fair Ladies brook no bloody wars,
ſweet peace their pleaſure breed,
The nouriſher of hearts content,
which fancy firſt did feed.

My Roſe ſhall reſt in Woodſtoock Bower
with Muſick ſweetly dight,
Whilſt I among the piercing Pikes
againſt my foes do fight:
My Roſe in Robes of Pearl and Gold,
with Diamonds richly dight,
Shall dance the Galliards of my love,
while I my foes do ſmite.

And you Sir Thomas whom I truſt,
to be my Loves defence,

Be careful of my gallant roſe,
when I am parted hence:
And therewithal he fetcht a ſigh,
as though his heart would break,
And Roſamond for very grief,
not one plain word could ſpeak:

And at their parting well they might,
in heart be grieved sore,
After that day fair Rosamond,
the King did see no more:
For when his Grace was past the Seas,
and into France was gon,
Queen Elinor with envious heart,
to Woodstock came anon.

And forth she calls this trusty Knight,
which kept this curious Bower,
Who with his clew of twined thread,
came from the famous Flower:
And when that they had wounded him,
the Queen his Head did get,
And went where Lady Rosamond,
was like an Angel set.

But when the Queen with stedfast Eye
beheld her heavenly Face,
She was amazed in her mind
at her exceeding grace.
Cast off from thee these Robes (she said)
that rich and costly be,
And drink thou up this deadly draught,
which I have brought to thee.

But presently upon her knees,
sweet Rosamond did fall,
And pardon of the Queen she crav'd,
for her offences all:
Take pitty on my youthful years
(fair Rosamond did cry)
And let me not with poison strong
enforced be to die.

I will renounce my sinful life,
and in some Cloyster bide,
Or else be banished if you please
to range the World so wide,
And for the fault that I have done,
though I was forc'd thereto,
Preserve my life and punish me,
as you think good to do.

And with these words her Lilly hands,
she wrung full often there,
And down along her comely face,
proceeded many a tear:
But nothing could this furious Queen,
therewith appeased be,
The cup of deadly poyson strong,
as she sat on her knee.

She gave this comely Dame to drink,
who took it in her hand,
And from her bended knee arose,
and on her feet did stand:
And casting up her eyes to heaven,
she did for mercy call,
And drinking up the poyson strong,
her life she lost withal.

And when that death through every limb,
had done her greatest spight,
Her chiefest foes did there confess,
she was a glorious wight:
Her body then they did entomb,
when life was fled away,
At Woodstock near to Oxford Town,
as may be seen this day.

CHAP. V.

The Conclusion.

THus you may see the fickle and inconstant state of those that are Inhabitants

habitants in this unsettled decayed world, though they are received into the favour of Princes, and are made Companions with them in Nightly Sleeps; yet all this is presently forgotten, and when once their frail and mortal bodies fall upon the earth, all their Pomp and Honour perisheth, and is buried with them. Rosamond, she that was so highly exalted in her Princes favor, one small drop of Poyson lays her as low as the Earth, and she that was the onely Flower and Rose to please and delight the smell of a King, in comparison of whom, his rich Pomanders and costly Odors were unsavory; yet now of her remains nothing good, only an ill noysom odour to all Posterity, according unto her Epitaph which was Ingraven on her Tomb at Godstow, where she was most sumptuously Interred.

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